

Preliminary Environmental Assessment

Santiam-Bethel Transmission Line Project

Bonneville Power Administration

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Santiam-Bethel Transmission Line Project

Responsible Agency: U.S. Department of Energy, Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)

Name of Proposed Project: Santiam–Bethel Transmission Line Project

Abstract: Bonneville Power Administration proposes to rebuild the first 17 miles of the Santiam-Chemawa transmission line from Santiam Substation to the line's connection to Portland General Electric's Bethel Substation. BPA would replace the existing single-circuit 230-kilovolt (kV) line with towers that could support two circuits. The existing line supplies both Bethel Substation and BPA's Chemawa Substation. The new lines would eliminate overloading of the existing line from Santiam Substation to the line's connection to Bethel Substation by having one new line supply Bethel Substation and the other new line supply Chemawa Substation.

In addition to the Proposed Action, BPA is considering the No Action Alternative. In the No Action Alternative, BPA would not upgrade or rebuild the line. The existing line would remain in operation.

The environmental analysis determined that the Proposed Action would have no significant impacts. There would be short-term, construction-related impacts such as noise, dust, vegetation disturbance, soil compaction and erosion. The proposed new double-circuit towers would be more visible than the existing towers. Some existing trees would be removed.

In the No Action Alternative, normal and extreme cold winter load conditions could cause thermal overloading of existing facilities and potential curtailment of electrical power in the area. Impacts associated with maintenance of the existing line would continue.

For additional information, contact:

Tish Levesque, Environmental Project Lead
Bonneville Power Administration
P.O. Box 3621 – KEC-4
Portland, Oregon 97208-3297
Telephone: (503) 230-3469, or
toll free 1-800-282-3713
Email: tklevesque@bpa.gov

To submit comments, write or call:

Bonneville Power Administration
Communications Office – KC-7
P.O. Box 12999
Portland, Oregon 97212
Telephone: (800) 622-4519
Fax: (503) 230-3285
Email: comment@bpa.gov

For more copies of this document, call (800) 622-4250 and ask for the document by name. The document is also available at the BPA, Environment, Fish and Wildlife Home Page: www.efw.bpa.gov/cgi-bin/PSA/NEPA/SUMMARIES/Santiam-BethelTransmissionLine.

For additional information on DOE NEPA activities, please contact: Carol Borgstrom, Director, Office of NEPA Policy and Compliance, EH-42, U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue S.W., Washington, D.C. 20585; (800) 472-2756.

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